NUMB. CLVIII.

The GUARDIAN.

Gnossius hæc Rhadamanthus habet durissima regna:
Castigatque, auditque dolos, subigitque fateri,
Quæ quis apud superos, furto lætatus inani,
Distulit in seram commissa piacula mortem. Virg.

Friday, September 11, 1713.

I Was Yesterday pursuing the Hint which I mentioned in my last Paper, and comparing together the Industry of Man with that of other Creatures, in which I could not but observe, that notwithstanding we are obliged by Duty to keep our selves in constant Employ, after the same manner as inferior Animals are prompted to it by Instinct, we fall very short of them in this Particular. We are here the more inexcusable, because there is a greater variety of Business to which we may apply our selves. Reason opens to us a large Field of Affairs, which other Creatures are not capable of. Beasts of Prey, and I believe of all other kinds, in their Natural State of Being, divide their time between Action and Rest. They are always at work or asleep. In short, their waking Hours are wholly taken up in seeking after their Food, or in consuming it. The Human Species only, to the great Reproach of our Natures, are filled with Complaints, that *the day hangs heavy on 'em*, that *they do not know what to do with themselves*, that *they are at a loss how to pass away their Time*, with many of the like shameful Murmurs, which we often find in the Mouths of those who are styled Reasonable Beings. How monstrous are such Expressions among Creatures, who have the Labours of the Mind, as well as those of the Body, to furnish them with proper Employments; who besides the Business of their proper Callings and Professions, can apply themselves to the Duties of Religion, to Meditation, to the Reading of useful Books, to Discourse, in a word, who may exercise themselves in the unbounded Pursuits of Knowledge and Virtue, and every Hour of their Lives make themselves wiser or better than they were before.

After having been taken up for some time in this course of Thought, I diverted my self with a Book, according to my usual Custom, in order to unbend my Mind before I went to sleep. The Book I made use of on this occasion was *Dacier*, where I amused my Thoughts for about an Hour among the Dialogues of the Dead, which in all probability produced the following Dream.

I was conveyed, methought, into the Entrance of the Infernal Regions, where I saw *Rhadamanthus*, one of the Judges of the Dead, seated in his Tribunal. On his Left Hand stood the Keeper of *Erebus*, on his Right the Keeper of *Elysium*. I was told he sat upon Women that Day, there being several of the Sex lately arrived, who had not yet their Mansions assigned them. I was surprized to hear him ask every one of them the same Question, namely, *what they had been doing*. Upon this Question being proposed to the whole Assembly, they stared one upon another, as not knowing what to Answer. He then interrogated each of them separately. Madam, says he, to the first of them, you have been upon the Earth about fifty Years; What have you been doing there all this while? Doing, says she, really I don't know what I have been doing: I desire I may have time given me to recollect. After about half an Hours pause she told him, that she had been playing at Crimp; upon which *Rhadamanthus* beckoned to the Keeper on his Left Hand, to take her into Custody. And you, Madam, says the Judge, that look with such a soft and languishing Air; I think you set out for this Place in your Nine and twentieth Year, what have you been doing all this while? I had a great deal of Business on my Hands, says she, being taken up the first Twelve Years of my Life, in dressing a Jointed Baby, and all the remaining part of it in reading Plays and Romances. Very well, says he, you have employed your Time to good purpose. Away with her. Then came a plain Country Woman: Well Mistress, says *Rhadamanthus*, and what have you been doing? An't please your Worship, says she, I did not live quite Forty Years; and in that time brought my Husband seven Daughters, made him nine thousand Cheeses, and left my eldest Girl with him, to look after his House in my Absence, and who I may venture to say is as pretty a House-wife as any in the Country. *Rhadamanthus* smiled at the Simplicity of the good Woman, and order'd the Keeper of *Elysium* to take her into his Care. And you, fair Lady,

Lady, says he, what have you been doing these Five and thirty Years? I have been doing no Hurt, I assure you, Sir, said she. That is well, says he, but what Good have you been doing? The Lady was in great Confusion at this Question, and not knowing what to answer, the two Keepers leaped out to seize her at the same time; the one took her by the Hand to convey her to *Elysium*, the other caught hold of her to carry her away to *Erebus*. But *Rhadamanthus* observing an ingenuous Modesty in her Countenance and Behaviour, bid them both let her loose, and set her aside for a Re-examination when he was more at Leisure. An old Woman, of a proud and sower Look, presented her self next at the Bar, and being asked what she had been doing? Truly, says she, I lived threescore and ten Years in a very wicked World, and was so angry at the Behaviour of a parcel of young Flirts, that I past most of my last Years in condemning the Follies of the Times; I was every Day blaming the silly Conduct of People about me, in order to deter those I conversed with from falling into the like Errors and Miscarriages. Very well, says *Rhadamanthus*, but did you keep the same watchful Eye over your own Actions? Why truly, says she, I was so taken up with publishing the Faults of others, that I had no time to consider my own. Madam, says *Rhadamanthus*, be pleased to file off to the Left, and make Room for the venerable Matron that stands behind you. Old Gentlewoman, says he, I think you are fourscore? You have heard the Question, what have you been doing so long in the World? Ah, Sir! says she, I have been doing what I should not have done, but I had made a firm Resolution to have changed my Life, if I had not been snatched off by an untimely End. Madam, says he, you will please to follow your Leader; and spying another of the same Age, interrogated her in the same Form. To which the Matron reply'd, I have been the Wife of a Husband who was as dear to me in his old Age as in his Youth. I have been a Mother, and very happy in my Children, whom I endeavoured to bring up in every thing that is good. My eldest Son is blest by the Poor, and beloved by every one that knows him. I lived within my own Family, and left it much more wealthy than I found it. *Rhadamanthus*, who knew the Value of the old Lady, smiled upon her in such a manner, that the Keeper of *Elysium*, who knew his Office, reached out his Hand to her. He no sooner touched her but her Wrinkles vanished, her Eyes sparkled, her Cheeks glow'd with Blushes, and she appeared in full Bloom and Beauty. A young Woman observing that this Officer, who conducted the happy to *Elysium*, was so great a *Beautifyer*, long'd to be in his Hands, so that pressing through the Croud, she was the next that appeared at the Bar. And being asked what she had been doing the five and twenty Years that she had past in the World, I have endeavoured, says she, ever since I came to Years of Discretion, to make my self Lovely and gain Admirers. In order to it I past my Time in bottling up May-dew, inventing White-washes, mixing Colours, cutting out Patches, consulting my Glass, ruining my Complexion, tearing off my Tucker, sinking my Stays—— *Rhadamanthus*, without hearing her out, gave the Sign to take her off. Upon the Approach of the Keeper of *Erebus* her Colour faded, her Face was puckered up with Wrinkles, and her whole Person lost in Deformity.

I was then surprised with a distant Sound of a whole Troop of Females that came forward laughing, singing and dancing. I was very desirous to know the Reception they would meet with, and withal was very apprehensive, that *Rhadamanthus* would spoil their Mirth: But at their nearer Approach the Noise grew so very great that it awakened me.

I lay some time, reflecting in my self on the Oddness of this Dream, and could not forbear asking my own Heart, what I was doing? I answered my self, that I was writing *Guardians*. If my Readers make as good a Use of this Work as I design they should, I hope it will never be imputed to me as a Work that is vain and unprofitable.

I shall conclude this Paper with recommending to them the same short Self-Examination. If every one of them frequently lays his Hand upon his Heart, and considers what he is doing, it will check him in all the idle or, what is worse, the vitious Moments of Life, lift up his Mind when it is running on in a Series of indifferent Actions, and encourage him when he is engaged in those which are virtuous and laudable. In a Word, it will very much alleviate that Guilt which the best of Men have Reason to acknowledge in their daily Confession, of *leaving undone those things which they ought to have done, and of doing those things which they ought not to have done.*

ADVERTISEMENTS.

A Warning against Popery. Being an Account of the late Conversion of Mr. John Bernil alias Barton, an eminent Romish Priest, to the Reform'd Church of England; being the compleatest Account of the gross Cheats and Errors which was ever Published of that Church, of the Confutation of the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, of Purgatory, forbidding Priests to Marry, and the Price of Sins; very proper to be read in all Protestant Families at this Time. Price Bound 2 s. 6 d. Printed for John Philips at the Black Bull against the Royal Exchange in Cornhill.

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LONDON: Printed for *J. Tonson* in the *Strand*; and Sold by *A. Baldwin* in *Warwick-Lane*; where Advertisements are taken in. 1713.